ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A multimedia collaboration system integrates separate real-time and asynchronous network paths--the former for real-time audio and video, and the latter for control signals and textual, graphical and other data--in a manner that is interoperable across different computer and network operating system platforms and which facilitates close approximations of face-to-face collaboration, while liberating the participants from the limitations of time and distance.

In one embodiment, the system and method include at least one analog video-signal source, a plurality of video display devices, and at least one communication control component configured to produce digital control-signals. This system and method further provide for a computer network having an unshielded twisted pair (UTP) defining a UTP communication path arranged for video-signal transportation and configured to multiplex analog video-signals originating at one of the video-signal sources, with digital control-signals from one of the communication control components. The system and method further provide for the transmission of multiplexed signals along the UTP communication path to at least one of the video display devices, and use the control-signals to control reproduction of TV quality color video images on at least one of the video display devices, based on the video-signals.